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PRESS RELEASE

CONFIDENCE COURSE BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

More Funding For National Courses

London, May 2008 – More gay men across the UK can get what they want from life, love and in the bedroom thanks to additional funding for GMFA's National group work. GMFA have been providing courses to men in London for many years but thanks to the success of a national program last year, funding to carry on this important work has been extended. The first of these practical skills-based courses is designed to build men's confidence in their sex and social life. The course will enable men to start conversations more easily, and give men the confidence to say "no" to sex that they don't want. There are tips on communicating sexual boundaries and keeping sex safe, as well as strategies for dealing with rejection.

"It's easy to think that confidence is something that you're born with, but actually confidence is a skill that you can build," said Matthew Hodson, Head of Programmes for GMFA. "Confidence is important for negotiation in

many aspects of your life and confidence in sexual situations can help to make the sex that you have safer. When we asked men what skills they wanted help with, confidence was one of the top listed, so we're thrilled to be able to offer these courses again."

One course participant said, "Before, I always seemed to let the other guy make the running and, by default, take charge. I always found myself being pushed into situations that I didn't really want. Now I feel, and am, much more in charge and have no hesitation in saying no when I do not want to go in that direction. I feel that my partners respect me far more as a result."

The course is run by both GMFA and trainers from local gay charities and healthcare services including: The Sheffield Centre for HIV & Sexual Health, Southampton Gay Community Health Service, Yorkshire MESMAC, THT, MESMAC North East, The Eddystone Trust, The Armistead Project and LGF.

All of GMFA's courses and workshops are free of charge to participants but places are limited and must be booked in advance. To book a place, go to www.gmfa.org.uk/national or call 020 7738 6872.

The *Building Your Confidence Course* is a one day course which takes place on Saturday from 10am to 5pm. The dates for the course are:

Saturday 12th July: Manchester
Swansea
Birmingham
Leeds

Saturday 19th July: Liverpool
Brighton

Saturday 26th July: Sheffield

Saturday 2nd August: Bristol
Southampton
Newcastle
Plymouth

Comments from previous course participants include:

"On seeing the advert I thought yes this course is for me, it gave me the tools and thinking process to act and focus myself in amore positive way. It focused for me on stop playing the negative tapes in your mind and think more creatively and confidently."

"I feel perfectly calm, now, in making requests – and I feel it is a natural right. Before, I never felt able to make requests or negotiate. Equally, I now am able to politely refuse requests from others, when necessary, whereas in the past I would usually go along with them even though I did not really want to."

"I would recommend the course to other gay men as I believe there are many out there with issues of self-esteem and self-confidence. That confidence is learned and anybody can be confident."

- Ends -

Notes to editor:

About GMFA:

GMFA was established in 1992 and is the UK's leading charity dedicated to gay men's health. GMFA's mission is to improve gay men's health by increasing the control they have over their own lives. We believe that the best health promotion for gay men comes from gay men themselves, and so we use the knowledge and ideas of our 170 volunteers (most of them gay men) to design and plan our thought provoking sexual health interventions. We have received international acclaim for our Sex and Sexual Health website (www.gmfa.org.uk/sex). Our other websites include a detailed listing of sexual health services available for gay men in London (www.gmfa.org.uk/londonservices), an information resource for HIV positive gay men (www.gmfa.org.uk/positive) and a guide to gay sports and social groups in London (www.gmfa.org.uk/theguide). All of our sites can be accessed at www.gmfa.org.uk. GMFA produce a range of advertising campaigns, leaflets, postcards and booklets. Independent surveys have concluded that our campaigns

reach up to 60% of the London gay population and we are the most reliable agency at reaching gay men. In addition to this we distribute our own health magazine, FS, free to London's gay bars and clubs to further educate gay men about relationships, their bodies, general health and STIs. Over the last fourteen years we have provided courses for over 10,000 gay men, providing safer sex education, life skills and stop smoking courses. We currently provide a range of groupwork interventions across England and Wales. GMFA has Big Lottery funding to create sexual health interventions for Black gay men in London.